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Lebanon: The number of Arab terrorists in the country raises difficult problems for the government. [REDACTED]

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LEBANON: A SUDDEN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF ARAB TERRORISTS IN LEBANON RAISES DIFFICULT PROBLEMS FOR THE GOVERNMENT.

PRESIDENT HILU IS CONCERNED ABOUT A RECENT INFLUX OF SOME 300 ADDITIONAL ARAB COMMANDOS INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] THE LEBANESE BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE NOW AT LEAST 800 FEDAYEEN IN THE SOUTH, AND SAY THAT CONTROLLING THEM WILL BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR THE LEBANESE ARMY. THIS LATEST INFLUX IS THOUGHT TO BE COMPOSED PRIMARILY OF MEMBERS OF THE SYRIAN-BACKED FEDAYEEN GROUP, "SAIQAH" {THUNDERBOLT}.

THE GOVERNMENT IS UNABLE TO TAKE STRONG MEASURES AGAINST THE FEDAYEEN FOR FEAR OF PROVOKING THE COUNTRY'S LARGE MUSLIM COMMUNITY, WHICH IS GENERALLY SYMPATHETIC TO THE COMMANDOS. ON THE OTHER HAND, A FAILURE TO RESTRICT THE TERRORISTS' ACTIVITIES COULD WELL BRING A SHARP REPRISAL FROM ISRAEL.

THE LEBANESE HAVE CONSIDERED VARIOUS COURSES TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM--INCLUDING ASKING FOR A LARGER UN PRESENCE ON THE LEBANESE-ISRAELI BORDER. FOR THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, THEY HAVE DECIDED TO TRY TO RESTRICT THE FEDAYEEN'S FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WHILE AVOIDING A DIRECT MILITARY CONFRONTATION. THIS POLICY PROBABLY WILL NOT SUCCEED FOR LONG, HOWEVER.

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